

THE COMPANION



...and We're Back!

After 3 years we've dusted off the cobwebs and brought back our newsletter, The Companion. It's great to be back and we can't wait to keep you updated with all the wonderful programming and events we have coming up.

Each newsletter may look a little different, but you can always count on a Resource Corner, Grounds for Gratefulness, Upcoming Events and a Mindful Message from our Executive Director, Cindy Reffke.

- **Resource Corner:** A place that we get the chance to highlight other amazing non-profits that are working to help individuals dealing with mental health.
- **Mindful Message:** Each month our Executive director, Cindy Reffke, will have a mindful message pertaining to something with mental health and/or suicide. This month's is "Music Makes the World Go Round"...keep scrolling because it's a good read!

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A Walk To Remember 2025

On Sunday, May 4th together with over 350 participants we gathered for our annual Walk to Remember. It was a beautiful, sunny spring day that couldn't have been more perfect.

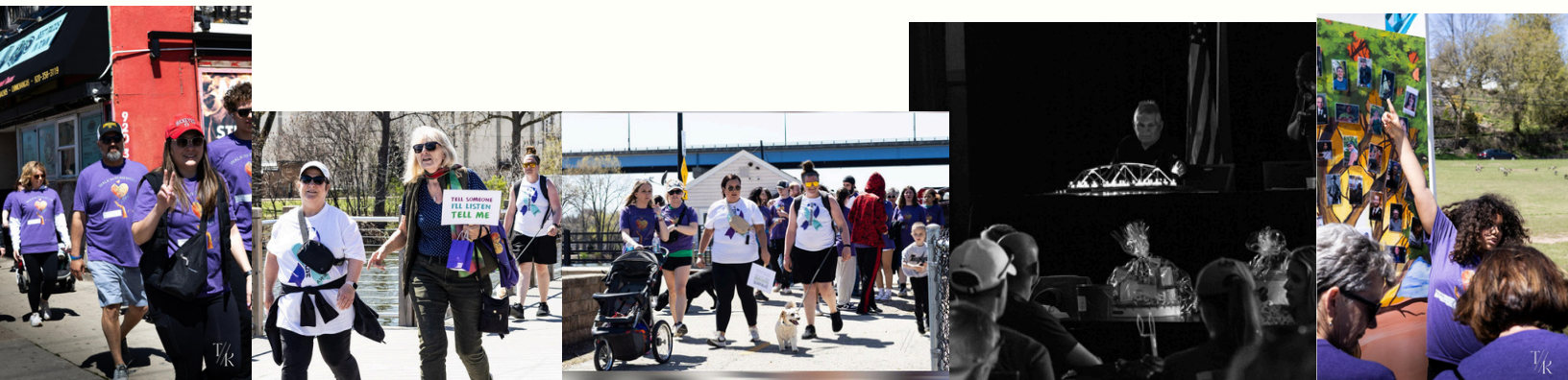
The walk was held at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley Hotel which was a perfect spot for our walk headquarters. They were so accommodating and allowed us to also invite our dog family members to walk with us! Before we started the walk we had a wonderful pianist from Lawrence University play for us and did a beautiful job. Cindy, our Executive Director, gave a presentation about how bridges bring people together much like our walk does for suicide survivors.

The walk went down College Avenue, through Ellen Kort Peace Park and across some area favorite bridges and parks. Local artist Billy Stuckart created an amazing tree located in Ellen Kort Peace Park, where we showcased photos of loved ones we gathered to remember.

Between our raffle baskets, silent auction, and the generosity of our participants we were able to raise almost \$10,000!!

We are **SO** grateful for the support of all the participants, for all of the walkers and their families for joining us, the sponsors who supported us and for all of the volunteers who helped to make the day great. We couldn't have done it without you!!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 3rd 2026 for next years Walk to Remember!



Resource Corner: Us 2

Are you or someone you know struggling to find help with their mental health? Well we found something we think might be helpful! Us 2 Behavioral Health Care, Inc is a non-profit that is working to advance health equity by removing barriers and creating an inclusive community where everyone can reach their full potential. They provide 1 on 1 therapy to individuals 4 years old and up. Accessible group therapy is also a wonderful resource they offer. To top it off, they accept over 45 forms of insurance, self-pay, and sliding fee scale options to find the best coverage for your care! Do you work in the medical field? They have a learning platform that allows you to obtain a variety of CEU Trainings both in person or on-demand. Do yourself, and your mental health a favor, go check Us 2 out! Scan the QR code or follow this link: <https://us2bhc.org/>



Scan to visit
their website!

Upcoming Events & Support Group Dates

Saturday, June 14th - Flag Day Parade
@Wisconsin Avenue 2-4pm

Thursday, July 17th - Butterfly Release Event
@Appleton City Park 6-8pm

Friday, September 5th - Eve of Destruction
@Wisconsin International Raceway 3-6pm

Saturday, November 29th - Annual Gala
@Van Abel's of Hollandtown (Kaukauna, WI)
5-10pm

Support After Suicide (SAS) Support Group Dates:

All SAS group meetings will meet at our office
(211 E. Franklin St. Appleton, WI 54913)

Thursday, June 19th @6-8pm

Thursday, August 21st @6-8pm

Thursday, September 18th @6-8pm

Thursday, October 16th @6-8pm

Thursday, November 20th @6-8pm

Thursday, December 18th @6-8pm

*This SAS group meeting will be held at the
Bergstrom Mahler Museum*

JUNE'S MINDFUL MESSAGE: "MUSIC MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND"

By Cindy Reffke

Imagine a world without music. What would a movie be without music enhancing the story? What would a parade be without a marching band? What would a musical sound like without music and singing? I can hear Julie Andrews singing the The Hills Are Alive with the Sound of Music and Judy Garland's famous song and one of my favorites, Somewhere Over the Rainbow in the Wizard of Oz. The beautiful hymns often sung in our churches with the organ playing in the background.

Music is good for our mental health. It's good for our souls. Our favorite songs can take us back to the moments we first heard them. They can put a smile on our face and a tap in our toes. Music can bring us out of our chairs and drive us to start dancing. Music can make us all singers even if we only sing in our cars and in the shower.

Last year I heard the most remarkable speaker. His message was be the buffalo and face life's storms. He explained that In Colorado there is a part of the landscape where both cows and buffalo graze. When a storm comes up the cows run away from the storm, cows can't run very fast and they often get caught in the storm they are running from. The buffalo run into the storm and face it head on. The speaker wanted us to follow the buffalo's lead and run into our challenges.

One of the other suggestions he had was to develop a playlist of all of our favorite music and keep it close to us. He had a QR code tattooed on his arm of his playlist so all he had to do was scan it with his phone and his music would play. We don't need to go that far yet I thought developing a playlist was a great idea.

I would be remiss if I didn't also mention that music can spark emotions of those we loved and lost too soon. However, if we hear a song that reminds us of our person instead of turning the channel or turning off the music take a moment to enjoy the music once shared with our loved one. Ask ourselves what about the melody and words of the song spark those emotions?

Instead of running from it run to it like the buffalo and enjoy it.

The benefits of welcoming music into our lives are plentiful. Music can help to reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, reduce pain, improve sleep quality, brighten our mood, increase mental alertness and improve our memory. It can help to fend off depression.

Moral of the story? Develop your playlist and enjoy this beautiful summer with music!